

§ 143B-437.52. Job Development Investment Grant Program.

(a) Program. – There is established the Job Development Investment Grant Program to be administered by the Economic Investment Committee. In order to foster job creation and investment in the economy of this State, the Committee may enter into agreements with businesses to provide grants in accordance with the provisions of this Part. The Committee, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall develop criteria to be used in determining whether the conditions of this section are satisfied and whether the project described in the application is otherwise consistent with the purposes of this Part. Before entering into an agreement, the Committee must find that all the following conditions are met:

- (1) The project proposed by the business will create, during the term of the agreement, a net increase in employment in this State by the business.
- (2) The project will benefit the people of this State by increasing opportunities for employment and by strengthening this State's economy by, for example, providing worker training opportunities, constructing and enhancing critical infrastructure, increasing development in strategically important industries, or increasing the State and local tax base.
- (3) The project is consistent with economic development goals for the State and for the area where it will be located.
- (4) A grant under this Part is necessary for the completion of the project in this State.
- (5) The total benefits of the project to the State outweigh its costs and render the grant appropriate for the project.
- (6) For a project located in a development tier three area, the affected local governments have participated in recruitment and offered incentives in a manner appropriate to the project.

(b) Priority. – In selecting between applicants, a project that is located in an Eco-Industrial Park certified under G.S. 143B-437.08 has priority over a comparable project that is not located in a certified Eco-Industrial Park.

(c) Award Limitations. – The following limitations apply to grants awarded under this Part:

- (1) Maximum liability. – The maximum amount of total annual liability for grants awarded in any single calendar year under this Part, including amounts transferred to the Utility Account pursuant to G.S. 143B-437.61, is thirty-five million dollars (\$35,000,000) for a year in which no grants are awarded for a high-yield project and is forty-five million dollars (\$45,000,000) for a year in which a grant is awarded for a high-yield project. No agreement may be entered into that, when considered together with other existing agreements governing grants awarded during a single calendar year, could cause the State's potential total annual liability for grants awarded in a single calendar year to exceed the applicable amount. The Department shall make every effort to ensure that the average percentage of withholdings of eligible positions for grants awarded under this Part does not exceed the average of the range provided in G.S. 143B-437.56(a). The limitation in this subdivision does not apply to transformative projects.
- (2) Semiannual commitment limitations. – Of the amount authorized in subdivision (1) of this subsection, no more than fifty percent (50%), excluding roll-over amounts, may be awarded in any single calendar semiannual period. A roll-over amount is any amount from a previous semiannual period in the same calendar year that was not awarded as a grant. The limitation of this

subdivision does not apply to a grant awarded to a high-yield or transformative project.

- (3) Geographic limitations. – Of the amount authorized in subdivision (1) of this subsection, no more than twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) may be used for projects located in counties with total employment of 500,000 or more and five million dollars (\$5,000,000) is reserved for projects located in counties with an annual ranking pursuant to G.S. 143B-437.08 in the highest fifty percent (50%) of the remaining counties. In measuring total employment, the Secretary shall use the latest available data published by the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program. The limitations of this subdivision do not apply to a grant awarded to a high-yield or transformative project.

(d) Measuring Employment. – For the purposes of subdivision (a)(1) of this section and G.S. 143B-437.51(5), 143B-437.51(7), and 143B-437.57(a)(11), the Committee may designate that the increase or maintenance of employment is measured at the level of a division or another operating unit of a business, rather than at the business level, if both of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The Committee makes an explicit finding that the designation is necessary to secure the project in this State.
- (2) The agreement contains terms to ensure that the business does not create eligible positions by transferring or shifting to the project existing positions from another project of the business or a related member of the business. (2002-172, s. 2.1(a); 2003-416, s. 2; 2003-435, 2nd Ex. Sess., s. 2.2; 2004-124, ss. 32G.1(b), 32G.1(c), 32G.1(e); 2006-168, s. 1.2; 2006-264, s. 69(b); 2009-394, s. 1; 2010-147, s. 5.3; 2012-142, s. 13.6(g); 2013-360, s. 15.19(a); 2015-259, s. 1(b); 2015-264, s. 91(a); 2017-57, s. 15.15A(b); 2018-5, s. 15.1(b).)